

Technology in Rural Transportation

A recent study documented more than eighty proven, cost-effective, “low-tech” solutions to rural transportation needs, most developed or implemented by local transportation professionals. One of these solutions is outlined below:



Learn all about the simple solutions on the Internet at <http://inform.enterprise.prog.org>

The simple solutions report is available from Hau To at (503) 892-2533, or email: to@crc-corp.com

Traveler Information on the Internet

Overall goal:

To disseminate information about local area attractions to potential visitors and new residents, including, for example, local food and lodging information.

Technical approach:

Various small cities have developed web sites to promote local attractions and to provide tourist and traveler information to visitors. The City of Galena, Illinois, web site provides information on restaurants and local historic and natural attractions. The page includes information on how to get to Galena and where to park, as well as information on historic sites and architecture, music and drama, Mississippi river boat cruises and casinos, shopping, outdoor recreation, and guided tours. The Chamber of Commerce of the city of Decorah, in northeast Iowa, has produced a web site that provides information about local weather, businesses, organizations, churches, parks, city offices, and a list of local restaurants and hotels.

Current status:

The Galena web site has been operational since August 1995, and can be accessed at <http://www.galena.org/>. The Decorah web site is currently on-line at <http://www.decorah-iowa.com/>. Both are updated regularly.

Location / geographic scope:

The pages provide information about Galena and Jo Daviess County and the City of Decorah and its environs. They can be accessed from around the world.

Agencies involved:

The Galena / Jo Daviess County Convention & Visitors Bureau site was designed and created by Anne Holmes & Associates. The Decorah Chamber of Commerce also contracted with a service provider to create its site.



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Cost information:

The City of Galena funds the site by charging a small fee for each business that is promoted on the site. Decorah's site cost just over \$2,000 to design, and costs \$100 a month to maintain, funded by the Chamber of Commerce itself.

Key contacts:

For the Decorah site, Richelle Holsen-Jeremiah, Decorah Chamber of Commerce. 1-800-4NE-IOWA.

Have goals been achieved?

In the first 12 months that the Galena web site was operational, the Convention & Visitors Bureau reported a 60 percent reduction in the amount of printed informational materials that they mailed to enquirers. This has been attributed to potential visitors accessing the Internet site for information. The site is experiencing an increase in the number of new users of approximately 10 percent each month. At present the number of new visitors to the site each month is around 1,500. The Decorah Chamber of Commerce reports that they have had a good response to the site, both in terms of the numbers of users accessing it and the feedback they have received from users.

Solution timeline:

New features such as a database search, pictures of the town and maps to tourist attractions are available on both sites. These sites are frequently updated.

